

1. A DNA molecule comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
 - (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
 - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotides 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
 - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and
 - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2.
2. A vector comprising at least one copy of a DNA molecule as claimed in claim 1.
3. A host cell transformed by a DNA as claimed in claim 1 or by a vector as claimed in claim 2.
4. A host cell as claimed in claim 3, wherein said host cell is a bacterium, a fungus, a plant or an animal cell.
5. A process for the production of a protein of the TGF- β family, comprising culturing a host cell as claimed in claim 3, and

isolating TGF- β protein from said host cell and/or from any culture supernatant.

6. A method for treating or preventing damage to bone, cartilage, connective tissues, skin, mucous membranes, epithelium or teeth, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- β family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,
 - (b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,
 - (c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and
 - (d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2,
- to a patient in need of such treatment.

7. A method for improving wound healing and tissue regeneration, comprising administering a protein of the TGF- β family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,

(b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,

(c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and

(d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2,
to a patient in need of such treatment.

8. An antibody or antibody fragment which binds to a protein of the TGF- β family, wherein said protein is encoded by a DNA molecule which comprises a sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1,

(b) a part of SEQ ID NO:1 which encodes nucleotide 1783-2142 and encodes the mature protein,

(c) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO: 2, and

(d) a nucleotide sequence which encodes the mature protein with amino acids 382-501 according to SEQ ID NO:2.

9. An antibody or antibody fragment which binds to a protein comprising the amino acid sequence according to SEQ ID NO:2 or biologically functional parts thereof.